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黒の魔王
XII

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FREEDOM
NOVEL

Kuro no Maou

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Table of Contents

Kuro no Maou

Chapter 179 - Chairwoman

Chapter 180 - Rank 2 Quest

Chapter 181 - Element Master Vs Undead Monsters

Chapter 182 - Rule of the Adventurers

Chapter 183 - Let's Go to School

Chapter 184 - Operation Present

Chapter 185 - Simon Friedrich Bardiel

Chapter 186 - Welcome to Fairy Tale!

Chapter 187 - About the School

Chapter 188 - Things to do in School

Chapter 189 - Is this a mixed bath? No, it is a men's bath

Chapter 190 - Hero and Angel

Chapter 179 - Chairwoman

(POV 3rd person)

The one sitting in front of him, wearing a thin silk lascivious dress, was a beautiful young dark elf.

With a darkish brown skin colour opposite to the white skin of normal elves, and her feminine voluptuous body along with the Valhalla Silk dress barely covering her body further increased her charm.

If it was a normal man, his eyes would automatically be attracted towards her plentiful chest which was barely covered and seemed to spill out any moment, her curvy waist line, and her plump thighs visible from the slit that continued from below her hips.

No, maybe they would not be able to even move away from her face that looked like a sculpture of a goddess.

Glossy silver that shined like mithril were tied behind her head, and the silver hair dangling from there held extreme beauty but maybe because it also held magical energy, it gave of a pressure like the tail of a dragon.

Her whole face was made as if trying to perfectly follow the golden ratio but even among that, her long blue eyes were especially prominent.

And, those marine crystal-like blue eyes held languidness as usual but they were currently perfectly focused on the small boy sitting in front of her.

“You did well coming back Simon. I’m happy that you’re safe.”

“Ye, Yes.....It seems I have made you worry, I’m very sorry for that, Chairwoman.”

Simon answered with a somewhat restless manner. Just as he said, this beauty was, in fact, the Chairwoman of the Royal Spada Academy, Sofia Sirius Pacifal.

And this place was obviously, the Chairwoman's office.

As if boldly emphasising the fact that the chairwoman was the absolute top in the school's authority, the room was located at the centre and the highest point of the school and the whole city of Spada could be overlooked from the whole wall that had been made of not just glass but high priced Scea Crystal.

"I believe I told you call me Sofia 3 months back, did you forget already?"

"Ah, no.....not at all."

In front of the flustered Simon who gave a vague answer, Sofia seemed like a sly snake in front of its prey.

"That's how our relationship is, right? No need to be so hesitant."

Simon anguished over how a normal student and the Chairwoman had a relationship where he shouldn't feel hesitant but he remembered that it was the same when he first met this beautiful dark elf as well.

Basically, he was not good with dealing with this woman.

"Then, um.....Sofia-san."

"umu, Well, this is better atleast."

She seemed to imply that using '-san' was also unnecessary but he was not like Kurono who could easily talk freely with even his seniors.

"Thank you for allowing me to return back to school."

"I only did what was obvious, it's nothing that requires any thanks."

Simon bowed his head in gratitude but his heart couldn't be called very calm right now.

After all, it was not his wish to return back to the Royal Spada Academy.

“In fact, I should be the one to apologise. I was the one that recommended you to go to Deadalus after all.”

In the first place, why had been Simon working as an adventurer in Alsace village?

That was a result of the conversation that took place between them here three months prior.

[“fumu, if you don’t have money then why not complete some quests?”]

Due to ‘household circumstances’, Simon wanted to take some distance from his family in Spada, the famous noble household of Bardiel.

Thus, even on Simon’s guild card, the name Bardiel had not been inscribed.

With such reasons, Simon couldn’t ask his family to get expenses for the school and other various expenses.

And at the same time, so as to stay out of his family’s eyes, he decided to work in Deadalus which was a different country.

“No, I’m thankful to the chairwoman. It was me who wanted to go to Deadalus as an adventurer.”

But, now that the situation had changed, he couldn’t stay as an adventurer away from Spada.

That was the effect of the strong pressure of the Bardiel House, no, to be exact his elder sister Emelia.

“But, if you’re here, I would be relieved as well. That human army won’t be able to come to Spada after all.”

In terms of relief, even Simon was the same who had fought against the Crusaders at Alsace.

Yes, even with that ‘monster’ in a woman’s skin who all the adventurers together had been unable to touch would be unable to

break through the Spada Army led by the [Sword King] Leonhart in the Gallahad Mountain fortress, he believed that as well.

Originally, Spada which had been expecting an invasion from the Dragon King Gaevinal had already put up perfect defensive measures against it.

Unlike the peace loving idiots of other city-states, their readiness was in a different level.

“Now then, will you start attending here from tomorrow?”

Simon affirmed. The preparations to start attending school had been already completed.

Although, like 3 months back, he’ll have to move back into the dorms again.

“Well, this time you’ll get a lab as well so isn’t it fine?”

Well, it’s a bit rundown though, as Sofia continued, a question arose in Simon.

“Um, what kind of laboratory are you talking about?”

From the time Simon had admitted here, he hadn’t received any personal lab at all.

He continued with his alchemic research inside his small dorm room and sometimes borrowed other facilities while feeling ashamed to do some other experiments.

But, this was the case for not just Simon but for any student enrolled in the magic engineering course, it was a rare think to have a lab inside the school grounds. Only elites from big houses or geniuses with great grades possessed.

“From what I’ve heard, it’ll be a room from the old dorms. ‘That woman’ has already sent a large amount of money for it as well.”

“Ria-nee.....doing things on her own like that.....”

For any alchemist it was a great thing to get a personal lab, even for Simon, it was one of his dreams.

But it was, in the end, something that should be gained with your own hard work not something to be simply gifted by his elder sister, perfect in authority, assets, power, General Emilia Friedrich Bardiel.

“I’m expecting you to bring about ground-breaking developments for this school in the new environment you are being provided with, alright?”

“Yes, I’ll work hard.....”

And thus, giving words of farewell, Simon stood up from the giant sofa made of Bullhorn leather.

And when he was heading towards the white double doors to leave,

“Wait a minute.”

Sofia, who had closed in behind him without making even a single sound, put her hand wearing a white dress gloves on his shoulder.

“u, umm.....”

His whole body stiffened due to the overwhelming pressure being released by Sofia.

That was definitely not his misconception. Considering that she was once a rank 5 adventurer called the [Valkyrie Blizzard], it’s obvious she could stop a small elf boy from moving with simply her presence.

Although, if she really wanted to intimidate him, Simon would have been lying on the ground flat without moving a bit by now.

“Won’t you think about that thing with me once again?”

As Simon slowly turned, her charming body releasing incredible charm was there.

Compared to Emilia who had a big body as compared to the norm,

Sofia seemed smaller but even then her height was still tall among women, and she was almost one full head taller than Simon.

Thus, directly in front of Simon was not Sofia's beautiful face but her deep cleavage that made one recall of the great rank 5 dungeon [Elgrand Canyon].

The smooth soft skin closing in on his face twisted his reasoning as a man and the sweet fragrance from her body made his heart forcibly beat faster.

"If it was me, I could provide you with a much better room than that rundown one, no, there will be no need for any grades or research result either, as long as you stay there."

Caressing Simon's cheek with her finger, she raised his face to look towards her.

Sofia's crystal eyes looked into Simon's emerald eyes and their gazes intertwined.

Like before, her eyes looked languid but it held a charming radiance that tempted men.

No, even Simon, a mere student, could understand that she was 'tempting and inviting him' as a man.

Not just that bewitching attitude, the first time they met, she had even asked him this directly.

"You, won't you stop your alchemy and become mine?"

And the answer to that remained the same even now.

"I, have no intention to stop alchemy....."

There was no way Simon, even if he belonged to the Bardiel family, didn't know what she, who had such a high status and authority, wanted from him.

He had no intention of becoming her treasured doll, even more so if that involved abandoning his alchemy.

In the first place, he was a failure as an elf, without incredible magic, and no manly charm like Kurono had, why would she be interested in him who looked like a never growing child always?

No, maybe that was the reason. Without magical energy, an Elf wouldn't mature and grow, she might be treating him as a rare animal.

In any case, there was no way Simon, who admired true and proper love, would accept such kind of feelings from her.

And, now that he knew of a woman who had used her own life to protect him, he would definitely not accept such half-assed feelings.

"fufu, well that's fine. When you get troubled by that overprotective older sister of yours, come rely on me."

But she, who didn't know what was going on in Simon's heart, released him after laughing lightly.

"Thank you, very much."

He did feel a debt of gratitude towards Sofia who had helped him in running away from his family and sister.

But he wouldn't accept becoming a pet just for that.

He had resolved to return that favour in the form school merits.

As Simon gave his gratitude with mixed feelings, without realising that his face had become red due to her incredible charm, quickly left the room as if running away.

Chapter 180 - Rank 2 Quest

The mossy stone passage was so narrow that not even two people could walk properly side-by-side each other.

There was no light as there were no windows, and the airtight passage gave a somewhat suffocating feeling but it was only obvious as this passage was a part of a building that was underground.

If Lily's light ball would disappear, this place would be completely drowned in the depths of darkness.

This place was one of the danger rank 3 dungeons, [Revival Catacomb].

The monsters that live here are mainly Skeletons, ghouls, and other undead type monsters.

Just as the name of the dungeon suggests, any living being that died here 'revives' with false life energy as an undead.

Of course, since no magic that can fully resurrect someone exists, the revived undeads hold neither will nor memories.

That's because, the ultimate part of one's existence, the [soul], disappears from this world the moment one dies, so a person won't revert back to his own self just because his body became able to move again.

This underground tomb that was converted into an evil dungeon because it was overrun by undeads was now only used as a graveyard by those insane necromancers.

"Say, this might be my imagination but isn't this heading deeper and deeper as we continue?"(kurono)

We [Element Master] that became rank 2 just recently are currently completing a quest needed to get our next rank up.

Is what I said but the subjugation of 20 skeleton soldiers, which is

our objective, and the proof of subjugation [imitation heart]; we already have collected 40 of them and have clearly completed our quota but,

“What a coincidence, I was thinking the same thing.”(Fiona)

We were supposed to be heading back up to return but I feel like the reverse is happening right now.

“Nee, Kurono, look.”(lily)

“nn?”

Lily who was wandering around my legs was picking up something round shaped from the dirty mossy ground.

On looking closely, it was a core of a slime that we had defeated while heading into the dungeon.

As Lily dropped it, the round core rolled away near our feet towards where we were heading.

“Clearly, it’s sloped downwards.....”(kurono)

Thanks to this experiment, it was proved that this passage was further heading deeper inside this dangerous dungeon.

“Should we go back?”(Fiona)

“un, we need to confirm whether there’s any stairs heading up from the room at the end of this passage as well.”(kurono)

That’s true. As Fiona replied that, we started walking once again.

Now that I think about it, all the excitement and tension of going into a dungeon I had before had begun to descend just like this dark gloomy passage.

It’s obvious but there was no treasure lying around here and there, in the first place, there was no tasteful thing like treasure boxes here either.

From what I heard, in some dungeons where the system of the Ancient Ruins was still working, through what unimaginable theory, weapons and magic items were periodically generated apparently.

But right now, in this [Revival Catacomb], there's no such dreamlike perpetual motion system that exists and it's only an impure place where undeads and monsters keep on being born.

Thus, there were only walking corpses and other undead type monsters here and was made of the same unchanging passages of stone.

It kind of reminds me of that white facility so I feel depressed when comparing this to being inside that forest.

While praying to find the exit quickly, we silently kept on walking till the end of the passage.

.
. .

At the end of the passage was a large dome-shaped open space which was the biggest open space I've seen in this dungeon except for the entrance lobby on the first floor.

It's diameter seemed about 40m and looked like a gym, no, though I haven't seen one but maybe it's a dance hall?

But still, I could only overlap this place with that hall where those maneuvering experiments took place. Even the wideness is almost the same.

Well, leaving my personal impressions aside, after looking around, it seems that this hall acts like a crossroads of passages inside the dungeon.

On the opposite of the passage we came through, another passage of the same size was continuing. And on both sides, 2 even bigger

passages were present.

What's important here is that the passage on the right was a descending staircase and the passage on the left had an ascending staircase.

"Alright, looks like we can go back with that."(kurono)

I doubt those stairs would take us directly to the exit but it still will bring us closer to the exit.

Without any hesitation, we stepped into the hall and started to move towards the ascending stairs but,

GOGOGO——.

A sound like that of stone hitting stone began resounding from all 360 degrees of the hall.

Looking at the wall of the hall where Lily's light was barely reaching, apparently there were stone coffins lined up on the wall.

They were completely assimilated with the wall as if they were pieces of artwork so I hadn't realized till now but as expected, if the coffins began opening up while making a sound, I couldn't ignore it even if I wanted to.

"Sorry, I guess I made them wake up."(kurono)

From inside the coffins, skeleton soldiers that we had been defeating till now appeared.

Wearing black surcoats somewhat different from those of the Crusaders, and broken and chipped off armour and helmets, they were the undead soldiers rank 2 classified.

The weapons they held were curved scimitars and round shield sets. Some held tridents so that the narrow passages don't pose a problem, and maces. They had no sense of unity as if everyone picked up whatever weapon they liked.

"What should we do?"(Fiona)

In front of this lineup, Fiona asked me that but honestly speaking, I'm fine with both either running or fighting.

If we fight then we get more reward, and if we run then we can get out of this gloomy dungeon as faster.

Should we earn as much as we can? No, here we should quickly finish up the quests for rank up, right?

Then, let's run, the moment I was going to say that, footsteps began resounding from the staircase to which we were about to run to and dark brown giant figure appeared.

"What the heck is that? I'm seeing that for the first time."(kuroono)

Is what I asked but, this monster with a cow's head and a human-like body could only be a minotaur.

This figure that was making *bumoo* sounds from its nose had its fur peeled off at some parts and even some parts of its cranium was visible. Also, it's right eye was hanging out.

This kind of damage was the same for the rest of its body as well.

So basically, rather than a minotaur, it's more of a zombie?—

"It's a Minotaur Zombie."(Fiona)

"No special name, eh?"(kuroono)

It seems my prediction was right.

In any case, this Minotaur Zombie, even while rotting, was blocking our escape route with its huge body.

It's eyes that had lost the light of life had clearly captured us in its sight

It seemed to imply that it won't let us run away that easily.

"Can't be helped, we'll kill them."(kuroono)

"Roger that."(fiona)

“Un!”

Now then, though it's a pretty big area, if Lily's [Meteor Strike] or Fiona's [Aur Soleil] exploded here, we'll become part of the undeads as well definitely.

Let's be careful not to get too excited and use our full power.

I brought out the [Hararetsu] which seemed to close to evolving and the [Mithril Sword] that was good against such undead enemies from inside my shadow and took my stance.

It seems Lily and Fiona are also ready.

At the same time, the Skeleton soldier and the Minotaur zombie also started attacking enthusiastically.

“Let's go!”

Against these undead enemies, I took one step forward as I fired myself up.

Chapter 181 - Element Master Vs Undead Monsters

(POV 3rd person)

While raising a rumbling sound, the Minotaur Zombie's giant frame began rushing towards them with a bullfighting vigour but,

“Fiona, take care of that cow.”(kuroono)

“صخرة على نطاق واسع لمنع الجدار—[Terra Wall Defan]”

With a quick simplified chant, Fiona stopped the Minotaur Zombie's charge with a wall of stone rising up from the floor.

With a sound of a great crash that reverberated all over the hall, its charge was easily stopped.

No, it didn't simply stop the charge. Just like how Fiona had once protected Lily to give her time to activate her DP, the wall reached the roof of the hall and had completely confined the Minotaur zombie inside it.

The ranging sounds of the mad bull came from the other side but for a minotaur that only had simple physical strength as a characteristic even after becoming an undead, it'll have to wait till the effect of the defensive magic decreases before it could escape from there.

That time is not more than a few minutes but,

“I'll take care of the skeletons.”(kuroono)

It was more than enough time for Kuroono to send all these 20 skeleton soldiers back to the netherworld.

“Magic Bullet Arts, Full Burst.”

The black bullets fired simultaneously were not the usual full metal jacket bullets, but were Shot Shell bullet types which were 1 size

bigger and the tip was flat.

Since the skeletons were literally just bones, there was no flesh which could be pierced through.

Thus, for attacking them physically, rather than slashing with a sword or thrusting with a spear, a strong blow with a mace or hammer was more effective.

The pseudo Full Metal Jacket has a pointed tip and is thus effective in only piercing power but with a bullet that has a big flat tip, it should be more effective in smashing the bones.

And the massive amounts of Shot shell bullets fired by Kurono rushed towards the swarm of skeletons that was charging towards him.

The power of these bullets had already been proved in the previous battles with skeleton soldiers.

Those without any kind of shields had neither the means to defend against nor the reflexive speed to evade these small, hammer-like bullets.

As a result, with a cracking sound, dirty white bone fragments were scattered all over and the false life force inside them disappeared.

And the lucky 'survivors' that had been able to dodge this hail of bullets were met with an attack from Kurono wielding two black and white blades.

"Kuronagi."

Those who had survived with the help of their round shields, those who had been hit only a few times and had lost only parts of their arms or legs, and those who had been protected due to their allies ending up acting as a shield for them; all of them were cut apart by a slash of the cursed blade that had a dark red aura much more sinister than the undeads themselves.

It was common sense for even a rank 1 adventurer that slashing

attacks were less effective on skeletons but depending on the weapon equipped and the martial art used, that fact could be easily overturned.

The hatchet that could cut through steel even before evolving once, it wouldn't be stopped by mere skeletons with no means of defending even without the use of any martial arts..

“haa—“

Just after using Kuronagi, Kurono rolled and dodged the blade of a skeleton that came to attack as if it was normal and counter attacked with the holy white blade in his other hand.

In terms of pure sharpness, it was one level lower than [HaraRetsu] which had evolved once but due to the dense white magical energy stored inside the [Mithril Sword], it held purification powers able to drive away darkness.

That means, for undeads that use dark magical energy as a source of their life force, it was not just a simple weakness, it was a deadly poison that could kill them with a single touch.

The white slash created by kurono's strong swing tore apart the skeleton as if it was cutting through paper.

(“Yeah, it seems [HaraRetsu] really doesn't like the 'taste' of these skeletons.”)

Evading the incoming slashes and cutting through the skeletons with single slashes, Kurono was thinking of such things.

(“I guess, it's because skeletons don't really bleed.”)

The hatchet was showing signs of evolution during the time he went on Goblin subjugation alone so Kurono had been trying hard to make it evolve as fast as possible.

This was Kurono's personal conjecture but maybe thanks to drinking lots of Crusader blood during the battle at Alsace and also able to taste, even if slightly, the blood of an existence as high quality as an Apostle, it had become instantly closer to evolving

again.

When Kurono held the hatchet for the first time after the fight with Ai, its magical energy seemed to violently astir as if wanting more power so Kurono considered this to be the sign that it was going to evolve again.

And expecting another evolution, he had been swinging about the hatchet only while purposely not using Sword Arts but it had proved quite useless especially in this [Revival Catacomb].

“Can’t be helped, I’ll hope for it next time.”)

As he gave up here, he also seemed to be impressed by the Mithril Sword in his other hand which had been showing incredible ability.

“You are the last one!!”

The mace that the skeleton had put up to guard it was cut apart along with its head by the blade of the hatchet.

Without even able to make any scream, the skeleton’s broken half fell on the ground and scattered.

“My bad, a few slipped through.”(kurono)

Turning back he called towards Fiona and Lily in the rear guard.

“It would be impossible to stop so many of them alone anyway.”(Fiona)

In Fiona’s surroundings who answered coolly, the remaining few soldiers were burning in rumbling flames.

It showed that other than physical blows and light, these skeletons were also weak to fire.

Thus, Fiona was able to take care of them easily with the flames of her [Custom FireBall] wand.

Since all of the skeletons were on fire, it seems there was no chance for Lily to use her light Extra magic.

Even though she's the one here who has the most effective magic against undeads; Kurono wondered whether this was called being unwilling as he looked at Lily making a bored face.

Now then, let's collect the [imitation Hearts] and get out of here, is what Kurono was thinking but,

DOZUN! DOZUNN!!

Due to the loud violent sound coming from the other side of the stone wall, he once again remembered the existence of that Boss-like monster.

"Isn't it about time he gets out of there?"(kurono)

"Yeah."(Fiona)

As if it had been waiting for this conversation to happen, the Minotaur Zombie's giant arm smashed through the stone wall.

It seems the [Terra Wall Defan] lost its power with time and the Minotaur's strong arm, even if rotting, was slowly scraping and destroying away the wall bit by bit.

As it begins to crumble, soon a hole enough for it to jump out would be created.

It had been in an excited state from the very start but it seemed to have become even more ferocious due to being confined in stone and was delayed from its prey.

"I guess it'll be a bit tough to beat this one with just swords —"(kurono)

Kurono had not fought against a Minotaur during the maneuvering experiments but he did face a similar one-eyed giant monster called Cyclops.

Though they didn't have any special Extra magic, such giant bodied, absolute power-type monsters were tough in general.

He did have a Mithril Sword which was its weakness so it'll be

much easier from back then when he had to fight unarmed but the experience of winning after getting half-killed himself made Kurono feel cautious naturally.

“—Let’s go.”

Saying that, he tried to move but before that,

“uh, eeeiii!!”

“Eh, wai, Lily!?!”

Lily beat him to the punch.

After entering this dungeon, Lily had been doing the easy job of lighting the whole place so she must have been accumulating up a lot of frustration till now.

No, it’s not like Kurono had been ignoring Lily, it was simply that Kurono was more than enough for a swarm of mere skeletons and Fiona would take care of the ones who were able to escape towards the rear guard.

It was simply that no enemy had appeared where Lily actually had the need to take part in the battle.

But something like that didn’t matter to the child Lily. It was a fact that this had become a boring dungeon exploration for her.

Kurono who guessed Lily’s current state of mind gave an apology to her in his mind and at the same time,

“Farewell Minotaur, sorry I couldn’t take you on myself.”(kurono)

After confirming that a magic circle of light was created over the minotaur, Kurono realized that the battle was over.

Before the Minotaur could begin its charge, the dazzling pillar of light swallowed up its rotting body.

A flash, shockwave, and explosive sound——the aftermath of Lily’s violent Extra magic reached him.

As it calmed down, there was only dust remaining that flew up due to the attack and a silence befitting a graveyard once again took over the hall.

“Kurono, Lily gave her best!”(lily)

Showing a smile like a child who helped with household chores, Lily approached Kurono with tottering steps.

“Yeah, you did well Lily!”(kurono)

Without showing any regret of being unable to fight the Minotaur, Kurono patted Lily’s head and praised her like an adult.

“As expected of Lily-san.”(Fiona)

Fiona, who read the atmosphere, also complimented her.

“ehehee”

As Lily twisted around embarrassed, Kurono’s mood that had turned gloomy inside this dungeon also became warm.

Such a gentle atmosphere was,

BUMOOOAAAAAA!!

Disturbed by the roar that came from within the cloud of dust.

“What, it was still alive?”(kurono)

How can it be alive if it was an undead? But no one was here to retort that.

Rather than those trivial words, the fact that the Minotaur Zombie was still alive was more important.

Once again, making a thudding sound with its legs, the Minotaur appeared from inside the cloud of dust.

“There’s just bones.....”(kurono)

Kurono’s words were perfectly correct.

Even while rotting, the minotaur had an iron like thick skin but now there was not even a shadow of that appearance.

The two horns which were a part of bones were as it is and its whole body had also now become only skeletal.

But its size that made Kurono look up to it was still intact and its arms, which were only thin bones now, were still giving off pressure that showed that its physical strength was still the same.

“It became a Minotaur Skeleton it seems.”(Fiona)

“Is this an evolution?”(kurono)

“I wonder about that.”(Fiona)

After talking such useless things with Fiona, Kurono took up the two weapons in his hands and once again faced the Minotaur which was now in skeleton form.

This time I’ll go, the moment he resolved that,

“EEEEEEIIII!!!!”

Lily snapped.

He instinctively sensed that. It was obvious though considering the amount of displeasure her voice contained.

And, a magic circle even bigger than before appeared over the minotaur.

Rest was the same as before.

The Minotaur died.

“Kurono, Lily gave her best!!”(lily)

The Minotaur didn’t revive again, Lily gave an aura wanting to be complimented for that.

“Yeah, you did well Lily…….”(kurono)

While praying for the pitiful Minotaur inside his mind, the members
Element Master once gain complimented Lily.

Chapter 182 - Rule of the Adventurers

The proof of subjugating skeletons, the [Imitation Heart] was certainly in the shape of a heart but it wasn't located in the left chest like a normal one.

It was located inside the cranium. It had a crystalline look like a slime core and gave off a fiery light which is why from the eye sockets of the skeleton, a weird light could be seen glowing inside.

Similarly, the [Imitation Heart] of the minotaur zombie was also in its head so I recovered that as well for proof of subjugating it.

We, after collecting the proof of killing 17 skeletons and 1 cow, once again began to climb the stairs, this time without any further hindrance.

"It's pretty long, eh?"(kurono)

After we began climbing we realized that it was a big spiral staircase continuing upwards.

Since the curves were easy and gentle, we couldn't see how long we'll need to keep on walking.

At least, after entering this dungeon, this is the biggest staircase we have seen.

At the same time, there was a chance that those dull skeletons might appear to attack from both sides like in the passages so we couldn't lower our guard either.

"nn."

"What happened?"(lily)

Lily walking beside me asked.

"I can hear sounds, there's someone fighting not far from

here.”(kuroono)

It seems Lily and Fiona can't hear it yet but after walking a few more meters, those two became able to hear it as well.

“This is definitely the sound of fighting.”(Fiona)

The sound of swords clashing and continuous explosions.

Probably, it must be a well-balanced party with both swordsmen and magicians.

And going by the level, the opponents must be skeletons.

“Now that I think about it, this is the first time we'll run into other adventurers inside a dungeon right?”

“Is that so?”(fiona)

I affirmed. Well, the only other dungeon I and Lily had entered before was Fairy Garden and it was pretty much impossible to meet the few adventurers in the village inside that huge forest.

But, in this kind of dungeon that was much smaller than a natural field, coupled with the number of adventurers in Spada, it wouldn't be weird to run into another adventurer party.

“I think, as per the rules of the adventurers, we're supposed to not interfere right?”(kuroono)

“Yes, that's right. It'll be troublesome if we got into some kind of quarrel after all.”(Fiona)

It'd be fine if it was just a simple quarrel.

Considering the case where they are in battle, if we were to recklessly try and help them, there's a chance that they might discreetly push the enemies on us and run away themselves. Truly, what you'd call MPK (Monster Player Killer).

There was no gratitude or morals here. When your own party was in life threatening danger, running away even at the cost of others

was a very adventurer-like action.

Also, it could be said that the one who tried to help without thinking at all was responsible himself.

“Then, we’ll be ignoring them ‘kay?”(kuroono)

“Yes.”

“Yess!”

That said, in front of a party that is about to get annihilated, I doubt whether I’d be able to abandon them without feeling any guilt.

I’m sure, in front of dying adventurers, I’ll end up remembering Vulcan and the others.

No, let’s not think about that anymore. Waving my head, I began climbing the stairs again.

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The place where we climbed to was a hall with the same structure as the one from where we came.

Only, it was probably 2 size smaller than that one, I think.

And, inside this hall as expected, were adventurers who’d be the first party we meet here.

“Ah.”

I ended up making a surprised sound.

“—nn?”

Responding to my voice, one of the adventurers looked towards us.

The battle seemed to be over before we reached here and currently

they were collecting the [Imitation Hearts] from the skulls.

Among them, the one who looked towards me was a light armoured Werecat swordsman.

Even if they have hair, I still couldn't differentiate their faces but I could clearly recognise this one because of the giant sword he had.

No doubt, the sword this guy has is Vulcan's [Fang Sword], that means, he's, Jouto was it? A rank 3 adventurer.

"Oi."

While I was unintentionally focused on the sword, Jouto called towards me.

"You're rank 1 right? Why the hell are you here?"

I wondered whether Jouto actually remembers me from the time at Modred Weapon shop but in any case, I don't really care.

"No, we're rank 2."

"Seriously? Even though you're an apprentice magician?"

I really should stop wearing this robe.....

No if I take off the robe, I won't even look like an adventurer anymore and will be treated as a normal citizen.

"Well, by the looks of it, you just became a rank 2 recently right? Don't get over confident and go too deep inside alright?"

Whether it was sarcasm or a warning as a senpai, I couldn't make out the intent behind it.

Going by this guys mood, it's probably the former but I'm not stupid enough to get angry from something like that.

"We're returning right now, we won't be going any deeper."(kurono)

"That so? Well you were lucky, the floor from which you just came

up from——“

-Jouto pointed towards the staircase like they were descending to hell itself.

“—even a Minotaur Zombie can appear there. A rank 2 won't be able to deal with something like that. Don't get cocky just because you rank upped and go and challenge it 'kay?”

Jouto grinning in a mean manner but the fact that he still warned us about the Minotaur Zombie, means that he was still giving us a warning in his own way as well I guess.

“Thanks for the warning.”(kurono)

Well it wasn't something that required an honest thanks from me so I just curtly gave a thanks and passed through the hall.

From behind, “hey, stop talking to newbies and come and help us already!” A voice of the woman that had called him back at the weapon shop as well came.

At that time I didn't see her but seeing her now I could only feel a bit surprised.

That's because she was a Lamia.

Unintentionally, I thought of Aten. Maybe, their whole party has the same composition as [Irz Bladers]? Is what I thought but only these two had the same race.

The others were 2 Cleric Goblins and a Gargoyle archer. A total 5 man party.

I didn't know who the leader was but Jouto was a swordsman and the Lamia woman was also holding 2 scimitars and was also a swordswoman.

The similar looking 2 Goblins were wearing a white robe different from normal magicians that looked somewhat similar to the robe those Priests from Crusaders wore and also had wooden curved staves so I could instantly tell that they were clerics.

The Gargoyle had bat like wings on its back. I saw one for the first time here and they look like a mix between a goblin and an ogre since he's equipped with a bow he looked like a normal adventurer.

The number of humans in Spada was in majority so their party composition should be considered rare, I think.

But since the image in my head of Daedalus, where other races were more, is stronger, thinking of them like that of the Adventurer alliance, I only felt a bit calmer.

Now that I think about it, even Vulcan would want his sword to once again be swung in action in the hands of another adventurer next.

While holding such sentimental thoughts, we left that place.

Chapter 183 - Let's Go to School

Today, the month changed and now it was the 8th month, the month of Kouen.(T/N:Red flame)

Underneath the sweltering heat from the bright sun at the height of summer, I was walking through the streets of Spada, which I had gotten slightly used to, while wearing the stuffy apprentice magician robe.

The destination was the Royal Spada Academy, the biggest in Spada, and the most famous academy even among all the central City-states of the continent.

But no matter how famous it was, for me who hasn't spent even a month after coming here, I knew nothing about it except the name.

Now then, as to why I was heading towards this school, we'll have to go back to yesterday evening after we came back from [Revival Catacomb] after completing our quest.

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"We were lucky that that the reward for subjugating that cow was more than we thought. Maybe we should go eat something nice tomorrow."(Kurono)

"Yes, let's do that definitely."(Fiona)

Because the reward received from the Minotaur Zombie that Lily instantly killed was more than we thought, while seeing Fiona getting excited during our conversation, we entered through the door to the inn. Soon after that,

"Kurono-sama, we have a letter for you. Here."

I was handed a letter by the werecat employee same as before.

Taking it while giving my thanks, I quickly looked at the contents.

“Is it from Simon-san?”(Fiona)

“Yeah.”

The sender was as expected. As for its contents,

“What is written?”(Fiona)

“It seems things have calmed down on that side. Also, she wants to talk.”(Kuronon) (T/N: A reminder that Kuronon still doesn't know that Simon is a man)

Well, basically that.

I had no reason to reject the invitation, in fact there was a mountain of things I wanted to ask Simon who was a resident of Spada.

And like that, I was currently going to meet Simon.

It seems Simon has started going back to school which she attended before due to various reasons and was currently living in the dorms away from his home. So, it was mentioned in the letter that I'll have to go to the school directly when I come to meet Kuronon.

There was even an apology written in the letter for making me go all the way to come and meet her myself but after all I'm an adventurer, there was no guarantee when I'd return. Rather than wait for me indefinitely at the [Cat's Tail], it was better for me to ask for Simon at school.

Also, I was interested in the Academy as well so in fact, I'm actually happy that I got a reason to confidently go inside and check it out.

By the way, I'm alone right now because,

“It'll be easier to talk without me right?”

Lily showed such kind of concern.

I don't think it was something that worrisome but if Simon is going to explain some personal circumstances, it's true that it would be

better for me to talk to him alone.

Also, it seems that both Lily and Fiona had some errands to run today as well.

They'll prepare for the next quest at the same time as well so by work division, all of us were moving separately today.

While thinking that it felt slightly lonely walking alone, I started seeing more and more boys and girls in uniforms.

Realizing that I was getting closer to the school, I checked the few giant signboards to make sure and started walking again.

“Oo, holy shit it's big.....”

The Royal Spada Academy, as I reached in front of its gate, those words naturally left my mouth.

Walls as splendid as the outer walls of Spada itself were spread and was much better decorated than at least the 3rd defensive wall.

Maybe symbolising some ancient heroes, on the right was the statue of a sword wielding soldier in a mantle and on the left was a statue of a female knight wearing full armour and equipped with a spear. At the base of both the statues, a flag representing the school's emblem was also set.

The giant decorated double door main gate was wide open and a few meters inside a giant school building was standing.

In the centre a tall tower with who knows how many floors was standing and from there a 5 storey bilaterally symmetrical school building was spread.

It was much more magnificent than the high school I attended and looked like a great college, no, like a palace.

After coming to Spada, I am seeing such a great architectural structure for the first time.

If I was able to some day see the royal castle behind those walls

actually, I might get the same impression then.

For the time being, let's move inside the school grounds for now.

If I keep on standing here looking like an idiot for too long, I feel like the surrounding students will start looking at me like I am a country bumpkin.

But, in fact, I, who had started to treat this as a sightseeing tour and was having trouble hiding my excitement, finally went through the gate.

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After stepping inside the school grounds that was probably much bigger than even the largest college in Japan, I obviously decided to first head towards Simon's dorm.

So, I decided to ask for directions from the students, or so I wanted to do but.....how should I say this, the girls I called to were completely scared of me.

To think that my looks would have such an effect now, I really didn't expect that.

In Pandora continent where people talk naturally with frightening looking Orcs, there had been none who would be scared of me who clearly looked like a human.

But, here I got such a reaction.

The girls couldn't even look me in the eye and were squirming while looking below and were trying to somehow answer my question.

No, but seriously, this is troublesome. In addition to my scary looks, since I was nowadays always together with Fiona and Lily, I had completely lost any kind of antipathy towards girls of my same age which is my I ended up making such a stupid decision of trying to talk to these girls.

When I was still a high school student, I was still a pure boy who fidgeted while talking to just Shirasaki-san but due to the existence of Fiona who didn't mince matters and Lily who stays by my side like it was obvious, I must have become too used to having bishoujos around me.

Leaving aside whether it's a good thing or bad, calling out to girls so familiarly with my face should be really avoided.

Or rather, I should have simply tried talking to a guy in the first place.

While thinking that, thanks to the girl who showed me the way even while scared, I could get to my destination without hesitation.

And after walking for around 10mins from the main gate, while thinking that I should have arrived where Simon told me to, I was suddenly hit with an immense sense of Déjà Vu.

Remember carefully, yes, it was certainly——when I first met Simon, the day when I first visited her lab.

Led to a storage shed with the name of a lab, the sense of pity I felt for her back then.

I once again sensed that after reaching here.

That's because in front of me was,

“Could it be that she's living there?.....”

There was a shabby 2 storey building standing here which was so worn-out that it was impossible to think that this was in the same plot as those artistic buildings I saw just now.

It feels as if the lab at Alsace was simply expanded in size.

No, I doubt this one was built simply a large storage shed but there's no doubt that it's being currently treated as one.

Trying now to be too shocked by the raggedness of the building, I prayed to the self-proclaimed Goddess Mia hoping that this wasn't

where Simon lived and once again checked the place mentioned in the letter.

“uwah, no doubt this is the one.”

While feeling pity for Simon who had to live in a tattered building like this as if she was the protagonist of some world famous theatre play, I faced the giant storage shed in front of me.

Chapter 184 - Operation Present

After Kurono had left, Lily and Fiona looked at each other in the guest room.

Since adventurers had no need for decorated furniture, the room only had a closet for holding items and a bed so, the two of them were currently sitting on the white sheet of the bed together peacefully.

Between the two of them, a mountain of gold coins was also shining.

“hee, so you really have a lot.”(lily)

Lily was in her child form but the expression on her face was more like a corrupt merchant who found a way to make a lot quick.

“No no, not as much as Lily-san.”(Fiona)

Fiona’s words, on the other hand, were like a worthless merchant trying to bribe someone but her expression was her usual sleepy one.

“This——“

Lily picked up a gold coin, which had a woman’s face on one side and a magic circle on the other, with her leaf-like small hands.

“—Syncrea gold coin, how much will it be worth in Klans?”(lily)

It was a gold coin earned by Fiona back in the Republic before she came here to Pandora.

Of course, this gold coin was being used only in the Arc continent and the now-captured Daedalus.

“We won’t know till we get it appraised but considering the mineral contents of the coin, 1 coin should get us around about 100,000

kland, I think.”(Fiona)

And she had accumulated hundreds of such gold coins right now.

The total amount would be in millions, it was not an amount a normal rank 2 adventurer would hold.

But, it was a fact that from within the spatial magic inside Fiona’s hat, gold coins came out in waves while making a jingling sound.

“What about Lily-san? It seems you have many other types of gold coins except Daedalus as well.”(Fiona)

Near Lily as well, a mountain of gold coins had been created.

But as Fiona said, included in that mountain of gold were not just Daedalus gold coin with the dragon emblem or the Spada gold coin with the sword and crown, but also many other gold coins in different shapes, designs and sizes.

There were even some that looked like those excavated from the Ancient Ruins as well.

“In just gold coins, I have lesser than you but if I include the various jewels and gems as well, I think I have the same amount or maybe even more.”(lily)

“By jewel, do you mean [Queen Beryl]?”(fiona)

As if! While saying that in a fed up expression, Lily made a small magic circle in mid air from which many emeralds shining like her own eyes fell out.

“If I actually sold [Queen Beryl], that alone would give us more than both your and my gold combined. I was talking about these ‘normal’ jewels, I have many more other than these as well.”(Lily)

Her attitude was as if it was normal to have so many jewels but probably only the highest class of nobles even in the upper stratum would have so many jewels as Lily.

“You did well collecting so much.”(Fiona)

“That’s my line.”(lily)

It seems both of them were surprised with the amount of valuables each other possessed.

“Even if I did seclude myself in the forest of Fairies, a lot of things happen when you have lived more than 30 years, you know?”

Her words made one realize her true age which didn’t match her appearance but after all, it was a fact.

For example, Kurono wasn’t the first man Lily had saved inside that forest.

Or, many a times she saved merchants who got attacked on the highway by monsters as well.

“The child me was a softhearted person who helped people without thinking about gain or loss after all, I saved many people without thinking about the consequences.”(lily)

Thanks to that, there was a time when she had almost been captured as a slave when she had saved a a vicious slave trader as well.

Of course, that slave trader ended up with a body that won’t be able to do anything after that though.

“These things are what I got from saving those people. It was pretty useless to a fairy like me though.”

Naturally, selling her miracle drug and rewards for helping the Irz village with monsters also got accumulated over the years as well.

Nodding to that, Lily urged Fiona to tell her side of the story.

“All this is what I’ve earned while working as a normal adventurer.”(Fiona)

“Well, if you could kill salamanders while solo, I guess you would earn at least that much.”(lily)

Lily didn't show much surprise but it was a fact that Fiona could be considered a top-class adventurer with that kind of achievements.

But, since she held the same level of ability and since she take into consideration of how humans valuation system, Lily didn't think really much of that.

In fact, Lily was thinking that if Fiona had an appetite suitable for a girl of her age, wouldn't her savings be double of the current one?

"Well with that much money, I guess we both could but at least one or two cursed weapon, right?"(Lily)

"That's true."(Fiona)

As both of them nodded, they put back the mountains of gold inside their respective dimension magic.

"But, I feel like we took a lot of time to get Kurono-san a present even though we both had so much money."(Fiona)

"Well, there was no need till now. Also, Kurono's the type who gets troubled instead of getting happy on receiving a costly present after all."(lily)

Lily had this great of a fortune from the time she met Kurono.

Even while having enough money with which she could support a single man for his whole life, she didn't buy anything for Kurono because she knew how Kurono would feel.

Even without using telepathy, she knew that Kurono didn't like causing trouble or relying too much on others from just his speech and actions.

"I wasn't really hiding it or anything but it was kind of difficult to tell Kurono-san that I have money."(Fiona)

"Well Kurono's working hard to earn money after all, but—"

This was not a stage where they would stop because it was difficult to say.

Thinking back till now, Kurono never had a need for money as much as now.

While he was working as an adventurer in Irz, their income was enough for both of them to live on peacefully together.

Also, during the emergency quest due to invasion of Crusaders and the battle at Alsace, he had full support from the guild and the villages so Kurono barely had to spend his own money.

But, after the defeat against the Apostles, they needed more power as well as strong equipments.

To face the Crusaders who would definitely attack, they'll need to prepare personally which will of course, cost money.

Presently, Kurono didn't have any defensive armour suitable for his ability after losing his [Baphomet's Embrace] and didn't even have a magic wand, the main weapon for a magician.

Going by Kurono's current equipment, he wasn't a magician but a swordsman.

"Kurono needs money, enough money to get him equipment with which he could face those Apostles."(lily)

Of course, Kurono himself had the same objective which is why he was quickly trying to raise his rank.

Depending on the situation, he would even take a loan from them. They had such talks as well but they knew that Kurono wouldn't ask for a loan until he was close to starving.

"If we need equipment, the faster we get them the better."(lily)

Thus, Lily was about to use her savings for the past 30 years which had been untouched till now for Kurono.

"But, if we suddenly gift him presents worth hundred millions.....I wonder what Kurono-san will think."(Fiona)

Though not as much as Lily, Fiona had been seeing how Kurono

took action after the formation of [Element Master].

She had realized that Kurono's mind set was like that of a middle-class family's housewife who worked at economising at everything.

At least, he wasn't like those nobles who wasted their wealth as if that was their duty and was not overly greedy for money like those from the slums either.

"That's true. Then let's go little by little. First let's give him a present for becoming rank 2 first."(lily)

"I see, he would accept if it is just two weapons right?"(Fiona)

She didn't say one probably because she was already thinking that lily would give one and she herself would give another as well.

"I'll ask this just in case but Fiona, are you really fine with spending more than 1,000,000 klan for someone else?"(lily)

Lily's manner of speaking was as if she was testing her but Fiona answered without taking any offense.

"If it was all of my savings, I might have hesitated but if it's just half of it for Kurono-san, I don't really mind. Also, this party can earn hundred million klan easily after all." (Fiona)

With a satisfied smile, Lily jumped out from the bed.

"I see, then let's quickly go and buy the present for Kurono."(lily)

Chapter 185 - Simon Friedrich Bardiel

Without any unfortunate accidents, Simon came to greet me as soon as I opened that crumbling, worn-out door.

Then, the first thing Simon asked was,

“Huh, Onii-san, why is your left eye red?”

It was something that even I myself had forgotten about, the change in my appearance.

Leaving the detailed explanation about Mia’s Divine Protection etc aside for the time being, I first greeted him after meeting him after a long time.

“——sorry, I couldn’t meet you any sooner.”(simon)

As I greeted, Simon gave words of apology but,

“No, you had your own problems, right? Don’t worry about it.”

Giving a safe reply, I was trying to conceal my surprise at Simon’s current appearance.

That’s because Simon, who should be a girl, was wearing the boys uniform. (T/N: Kurono, you dense motherfucker!!)

After coming to Spada, I had seen a lot of students in the black blazer-type uniform of the academy so I was sure Simon would appear in the red tie and checked design skirts till I opened the door.

But even then for some reason, Simon was wearing slacks, what boys would wear.

Could it be that Simon was actually a guy?

True, this uniform does suit him and looking closely like this again,

he does look like a bishonen in middle school.

And I had been unable to decide whether Simon was a guy or a girl when we first met as well after all.

No, wait, think again, Simon is an adventurer along with being a student. Then, it's not impossible for Simon to fake his/her gender.

Due to the existence of magic and martial arts, there's no kind of discrimination due to gender but still, one would not be underestimated if the person was a man so I did hear that sometimes women would fake their gender.

Also, to not ask about anything regarding it was also a part of the rules and manners of adventurers like how they don't delve into the past of others.

Alright, I got it Simon, if you're faking your gender by wearing a guy's uniform then I'll accept that without a word!

After satisfying myself regarding the problem of Simon's gender, I concentrated back to the main topic.

"So you really are a student here, are you free right now?"(kurono)

It was the morning currently. In terms of high school, lunch break would start after two hours so students should be in class right now.

"It's fine. I still have many things to prepare for so I won't start attending classes until after 2-3 days."(simon)

Then it's fine. That means we can talk leisurely without any time constraints.

After entering Simon's room, just like that time, I sat on a chair and Simon on the bed.

This room wasn't overflowing with items like that storage shed laboratory, not yet at least.

A writing desk and a chair, a bed and closet; only the minimum required things had been set in here but I guess that'll change soon.

After all, the room Simon was using in Alsace's adventurer guild room was also filled with numerous things.

"For the time being, let's start with reporting each other's current situation, alright?"(kurono)

As Simon affirmed, I began to talk first.

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It's a common thing but there are many powerful nobles that exist in Spada.

Here, especially, the most influential are the 4 great noble houses.

One of them is the Bardiel household.

Their origin went to over 3000 years back, to the first and the strongest knight of the Ancient Demon King Mia Elrod, a person called Freesia Bardiel.

No, rather than a person, I guess I would have to call them as one the pillars of the [Black Gods] of Pandora.

[Dark Knight Freesia]'s DP was limited to only inside Spada but there were quite a lot of those who had received it so it could be called as a major God.

And, with this ancient great knight that climbed to the throne of Gods as an ancestor was the household of Bardiel.

But, whether they were actually the direct descendants, no, did they even have even a single drop of the same blood was unknown due to the 'Dark Ages' that exists between the Ancient era and the current era. Thus, there was no certain proof to that fact.

At least, the previous ancestors of the Bardiel family who built the household did claim that they were Freesia's direct descendants.

Considering that this self-proclamation was also an event that

happened over 300 years back, surprisingly the weight of history increased and now presently, the Bardiel family held even more authority and power than ever.

And, Simon was invited to this family as an adopted child.

Thus, Simon's full name was Simon Friedrich Bardiel, a really exaggerated name with even a middle name.

“is, is that so.....”(kuroono)

After finishing my own report, I heard about the family situation of Simon whose elder sister was a general.

And this was the explanation I got.

But still, for someone like me who hadn't spent a year in this world let alone Spada, I couldn't really understand the greatness even if someone told me about nobles and such.

I really could only say, 'I see'.

“So, why was such a big noble working as an adventurer in a village like Alsace?”(kuroono)

Even with my knowledge of the modern world, I knew nobles would be high class people.

At least, I doubt they'd have a personality that'd allow them to do something dirty like collecting herbs.

“that's, umm, it'll take some time to tell though.....”(simon)

“No, it's fine if you don't want to talk about it, alright?”(kuroono)

The manners of an adventurer, but, Simon shook her head.

“No, I want Onii-san to hear about it.”

That made me happy. It seems she does have some trust in me.

If she says that much, then I'll also carefully hear what she has to say. Maybe, it might explain why Simon was dressing like this as

well.

“I, from the time I was a child, wanted to be a knight of Spada.”

That was probably the time, 10 yrs back when she was adopted into the family.

“The Bardiel household had produced numerous excellent knights till now also, Lia-nee—um, Emellia, it’s the person that came to pick us up back then, do you remember?”

He asked me.

That black full plate armour that was even taller than me, there’s no way I’d forget that incredible presence.

I see, so that person’s name was Emellia.

“That person is a bit special even among the Elves and was incredibly strong already by the time I was adopted.”

At that Emellia was 12 yrs old, the youngest age at which one could enrol in the Royal Spada Academy , in easier terms, basically in 6th year of elementary school.

From that time onwards, she could easily destroy swarms of rank 1 monsters and with proper equipment, she was skilled enough to even take on a rank 3 monster alone.

Certainly, that’s a pretty fearsome elementary schooler.

“That’s why I admired strong knights even more, but—“(simon)

Simon’s face darkened a bit and he continued.

“I did not have that talent. Not just that, I didn’t have the ability even a normal elf would have.”

The Elf race was famous for having superior magical energy.

Thus, since battles mainly depend on magic, even while using martial arts, rather than physical ability enhancement, they

specialise in enchanting their attacks with elemental attacks.

“It would have been fine if I simply didn’t have magical energy, but, I couldn’t even grow into a big body like Onii-san either. No matter how much training I did, I gained no muscle at all.”(simon)

Unlike Dwarves, Elves weren’t the type that gained lots of muscle, and even among them, Simon had a thin physique.

There were even humans that looked younger than their age, for example my dad (T/N: See prologue if you’ve forgotten how Kurono’s dad was like), but that was even more characteristic in elves.

I heard this now for the first time but Simon was actually 16 yrs old, only a year younger than me.

But, his appearance was of the same level as girl Lily, a child in middle school.

“But even then, I worked hard in both magic and martial arts.”(simon)

“Could it be, is that why you are so knowledgeable in magical methods and techniques?”

Simon nodded.

Alchemy was completely devoid of magic. If Simon had been learning that from the very start, he might have been able to make something like that ‘machinegun’ by now.

“I still remember techniques, chants, and magic circles and I can even read one part of ancient letters as well. But, no matter how matter how well my technique is, how good my chant is, how well drawn the magic circle was, I could never activate it without magical energy.”(simon)

Those who possess enough magical energy to activate magic, though it varied from race to race, but still, such people were definitely the minority.

Even among the elves that specialised in magic, that number would be a little more than half of the total.

As a normal person, it wasn't necessary to use magic to live on but it was a fatal disadvantage for someone aiming to be a knight.

Even more so if he/she did not have the skill with a sword either.

"After coming to the Bardiel household, it took me 5 years before I finally realized that I would never be able to become a great knight from this family."

It was then that Simon started learning alchemy which was unrelated to magic.

"I am an adopted child, I have three older brothers and one older sister, so I am lucky that I had a comfortable position unrelated to succeeding the family."

If Simon had been adopted for the reason of succeeding the house, then it would have meant that he would have been unable to answer to the 'expectations' of the noble family of Bardiel.

"But at least I wanted to become independent enough so that I could return the favour to those who took me in and cared for me so I took admission in this academy and left the home at the same time."

I see, and now she was here.

No wait, I still don't get why she was working as an adventurer.

"Ah, that's umm, it's a bit embarrassing but I wanted to pay for my school fees myself but my savings weren't enough also, I was too concentrated in my alchemy as well so.....ahaha it really is embarrassing!"(simon)

I, who was looking at Simon as her face went red till the tip of her pointed ears felt more embarrassed right now though.

As I faked a calm expression while summarizing what Simon had said till now, basically, to pay her school fees and to concentrate in

alchemy, he took leave from the school and became an adventurer which was a convenient job.

At the same time, she had also taken permission from the current Bardiel family head, that is, her father as well.

But,

“Lia-nee, how should I say it, she’s more stubborn and strict than even stepfather. That’s why she had been harsh from the very start but after I gave the path of knight, she became even harsher and is always asking me to stop my alchemy. Even at the academy it took a lot of trouble to convince her to let me take the magic engineering course instead of management course. If I had told her about leaving school——“

I would be killed. So Simon decided to work in Deadalus outside of her sister’s reach, Simon somehow said that half angry and half scared.

“I see. You really had it tough, or rather, you had quite a lot of complicated circumstances, huh.”

I couldn’t say anything more than that.

It’s unfortunate to have to carry such family burdens but that’s not something an outsider could easily point out like that.

It’s just that the head of the family, her father, seems to be on good terms with her so the Bardiel house is still a proper home to her fortunately.

But still, to think there was such a discord with her sister.....

Completely different from my elder sister, Kurono Mana, who had looked after me since I was a child, I could only sympathize with Simon who didn’t get such a gentle sister.

“If ‘that thing’ hadn’t happened, I would still have been leisurely concentrating on alchemy in that storage shed in Alsace right now..”

“That thing, huh.”

“Ah, sorry, I shouldn’t have——“

Simon tried to smooth over while panicked, somehow, it seems I really made her considerate towards me.

“No, it’s fine, it’ll be a lie if I wasn’t affected but I have already sorted out my feelings so you don’t have to be so considerate of me.”(kuroono)

“I...see.....”

Now that I recall, I still hadn’t told Simon about how I met with the remaining villagers and also about the Divine Protection either.

It seems I made her worry so I should explain about my thoughts and other things in detail next.

After all, Simon also talked about things that she wouldn’t have said to strangers.

Chapter 186 - Welcome to Fairy Tale!

(POV 3rd person)

A little deeper inside the main street was the Bar, Fairy Tale.

There was no hesitation in Lily's steps as she led Fiona there because that's the place where she had drunk through the night with Kurono.

"It seems to be flourishing more than I thought."

In front of the door of the shop that had the 'open' signboard, Lily said that. She was currently in her child form but her consciousness was the adult one.

But there was no need to bring out her consciousness if they'd come only to have a meal.

Then, it meant that they had another reason to come here.

"Is there something at this shop?"(Fiona)

"You'll know soon enough."(lily)

Saying just that, Lily opened the door of the shop.

"Welcome."(shopkeeper)

The interior was pretty small compared to a normal café cum bar.

More than two-thirds of the chairs were filled and considering that more than of them were of races other than human, it showed the type of customers this place had.

And so, even the employee that came towards Lily and Fiona with a perfect business smile was also not a human but a Fairy.

Probably because she was surprised at seeing a fairy living so

normally inside human establishment, Fiona was curiously gazing at the small fairy in the apron dress.

Even in front of a being of the same race, Lily showed no signs of worry, in fact she spoke her business even before the waitress could open her mouth.

“Is the innermost seat open?”(lily)

“Have you made a reservation?”

The fairy was still smiling as usual but Lily clearly sensed a slight surprise from her.

“No, this is the first time I’ll be using the ‘inner’ side.”(lily)

Lily suddenly brought out 10,000 klan and gave it to the employee.

“I can request for it now, right?”(lily)

Since the fairy was only 30cm in height, she held the bag of gold coins under her arm and gave a smile.

“Yes, then let me guide you to your seat.”

.
. .

The seat Lily had asked for was certainly the innermost seat on the floor but it’s not like it was surrounded by some partition or in a separate private room.

Though it might be a bit difficult to see directly from the entrance, but structurally, it looked similar to every other seat on the floor.

“It’s a pretty amazing sound barrier they have put.”(Fiona)

But, Fiona had instantly sensed the anomaly the moment she sat beside Lily.

Though the sounds from outside could be heard, no sound would leak out from inside this barrier.

“It’s a seat meant to talk about things that shouldn’t be overheard, so it’s only obvious.”(lily)

Fiona soon realized what those who used this seat were looking for as soon as she saw Lily’s such normal attitude.

“An information broker, is it?”(Fiona)

Lily gave a small nod.

“You did well finding someone like that here.”

As its name suggests, an information broker sells info.

It wasn’t rare for places like bars or restraints where adventurers gather to also become places where info is sold. It was the same on both Arc and Pandora, Fiona thought.

“It was a full moon the last time I came here. I wouldn’t have known if I was in my child form.”(lily)

But still, it wasn’t easy to find it.

After all, nobody puts up a sign [Information Broker] boldly.

Normally, those wanting info above what is provided by guild seek for information brokers. They are usually used by skilled adventurers and usually reject newbie rank 1 adventurers as well.

Such information brokers are composed of a huge network of people who have been living in the city from a long time so only local adventurers are usually able to make use of them and outsiders aren’t able to get into contact with them unless they are extremely sharp.

When Fiona was in the republic, she did use such informants time after time but, since she was weak at human communication, she didn’t really like going to them.

“I’ll just stay quiet and eat and leave all the negotiations to you.”(Fiona)

“Yes, you do that, no problem.”(lily)

It’ll be troublesome if Fiona said something weird while not reading the atmosphere and displeased the other party.

Informants especially, have a habit of appraising the requester, so they might reject the request if they become suspicious of you.

“Lily-san, what will you order?”

Fiona had already forgotten about such things and was now focused on the menu.

“Let’s see—“(lily)

Lily was about to look at the menu but soon raised her head back.

“Sorry to have made you wait.”

That’s because the previous Fairy waitress had come back.

While shining a rainbow coloured light, the small Fairy descended on the table.

Her chignon styled hair and her round cute eyes were both the same colour as Lily, blond and green respectively.

Her appearance was like a doll that could move but that was something very natural for fairies and there would have been many in the fountain of light that looked exactly like her.

“So you’re the manager here?”(lily)

“Yes, but, you don’t seem too surprised at that.”

“fufu, it’s not that difficult to see that.”(lily)

To others, she would seem like a harmless cute waitress but that was not the case for Lily who held strong telepathic powers.

It would take some time and labour to see deep inside her psyche and thoughts but reading the outer layer of thoughts alone was enough to check that she wasn't just the waitress.

At the same time, Lily had also come to know that she was acting like a maid because she liked it as a hobby.

"Welcome to Fairy Tale, I'm the one in charge of this store, my name is Karen. Pleased to make your acquaintance."

"I'm Lily and this is Fiona from rank 2 adventurer party, [Element Master]."

"Sorry but can I give my order already?"(Fiona)

Shit, I should have fed her earlier, is what Lily thought but Karen gave a smile and listened to Fiona's demand.

"Yes please, I'll take your order first then."

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. .
.

In the end, the dealing of information did not begin till Fiona's order had arrived.

Fiona alone had ordered numerous dishes so Lily would be fine as long as she ate a bit from what she ordered and only asked for some tea.

"I have both things I want to know and things I want you to investigate."(lily)

Lily quickly cut to the chase.

"A trusty weapon shop, item shop, and a skilled tailor. And also tell me about a place where we can buy horses."(lily)

"Lily-sama, this is the first time you have come to Spada, I

see.”(Karen)

From Lily’s questions, she could infer that she wasn’t well informed about Spada so this must be her first time coming here but Lily guessed that this Karen already knew more about them than that.

For example, we were one of the adventurers that escaped from Daedalus and had taken the emergency quest.

“For both weapons and items in Spada, Mordred Weapon Company is the most reliable. It has a store in both upper stratum and lower stratum as well after all.”

“I see, so we can’t expect for any better than that right now, is it?”(lily)

So you have already gone there once. Lily nodded to that and confirmed that they weren’t so bif just for show.

“Other shops that I can recommend, I’ll make a list and give it to you along with markings on a map.”

“Thank you.”

I’ll also mark some good date spots as well, on those words, Lily ended up grinning while breaking her poker face.

It seems, she remembers her coming along with Kurono even though she was in her girl form, but it seems Karen had already realized that they were the same person.

In any case, with this info, they should be able to get a proper present for Kurono.

Not just that, since they were going to work as adventurers in Spada from here onwards, they’ll be able to avoid going to poor shops and directly go to the recommended ones.

In Spada where there were a lot of people as well as shops, it would take a lot of labour to find a good shop normally.

That’s why, people like Lily who first looked for informants to get

such knowledge weren't really rare.

"Then next, do you know about a rank 1 adventurer called Simon?"(lily)

She hadn't talked to Kurono about this but when he had told that his sister was a general of the Spada army at Gallahad Mountains, Lily didn't have a really good feeling about it.

Probably Simon wasn't a normal adventurer but actually belonged to some great family or something.

If you get tied up with someone with a high social status, who knows what kind of trouble might come with it?

It might sound like exaggerating but Kurono and them did possess power more than a rank 4 adventurer, there's a good enough chance that someone might try and use them.

That was still in the realms of a wild idea but until they knew what kind of person Simon was, why was he working as an adventurer, Lily felt that there was a need to do a background check.

If they were lucky, she could get hold of some kind of weakness and stop them if they try to use Kurono.

As Lily held such expectations, Karen answered after a small gap.

"I don't know, is what I want to say but I can't hide anything from Lily-sama."(Karen)

"No, you shouldn't hide things from not just me but anyone. Fairies don't lie after all, right?"(lily)

So it seems that legend was really just a legend, so thought Fiona as she ate the giant sandwich.

"I'll confirm this just in case but, name is Simon, Rank 1, Class alchemist, greyish hair and green eyed small elf, right?"(Karen)

"As expected of an information broker or is Simon simply that famous, which is it?"(lily)

Both actually, Karen replied with a smile rivalling Lily's own.

"I want to know further detailed info about Simon, if possible, along with his family relations."(lily)

"Very well, I'll be able to give info on him immediately as well though."

With the same movements as when Lily had entered the shop, she left a bag of gold coins on the table.

But, this time it was 50,000 klans.

"I want to know his recent actions and movements as well. Investigate that as well. At the same time, also get info about the Spada troops to which Simon's elder sister belongs to as well. It's fine even if that info is only general things that are commonly known."(lily)

If she were to actually ask about confidential matters regarding the Spada army, she'll have to pay upto hundred times of current amount. Of course, Lily didn't need such info.

"I understand, I'll complete my investigations within 3 days so please come again after that."

Karen gave refreshing smile to which Lily also gave a bold smile and they shook each other's small hands

"By the way Fiona,"(lily)

"Yes?"

"The bill for your food, pay it yourself."(lily)

The bill will be 4700 klan, those words spoken by Karen resounded vainly in Fiona's ears.

Chapter 187 - About the School

On the fact, that I have already come to here, I decided to let Simon inform me about the Royal Spada Academy.

I am guided, while walking east and west in the whole huge land.

I understood this place not only has a splendid gate and school building, but also has various other institutions working.

There are, shops for weapons and items, workshops for blacksmiths, the manufactured products are also sold within the school.

Among all this, the thing which surprised me the most is, the existence of Coliseum.

The gladiators are popular within Spada, just like ancient rome, for that, many coliseums are established in the whole city, but for it to be even present in the school.

However, this coliseum is used for training or for events, rather than a coliseum it's more of an even space like that of a gymnasium.

Others are, a very large outdoor exercise field, infirmary wards instead of infirmary room, a library instead of library room, at any rate, the scale of buildings is really big.

If I went on to take the whole tour of school the day would get dark, so leaving the guiding, I took the explanation about the Academy itself.

「Originally, it was an Academy」

At that time it wasn't Royal, but a religious educational institution which enshrined gods.

Though not on the large scale as that of Cross Religion, the gods from various places are enshrined, and in a big city it's natural to find such shrines.

The transmission of knowledge was helped by religious organizations in this world too, so at first they were made as educational institutions for teaching the theology of gods and various other educations.

The first academy made in Spada, now is Spada Academy.

「However, almost 100 years ago it became Royal, and after that it started teaching other things than theology too, like other subjects, magic, martial skills, and techniques」

This Royal Spada Academy, on top is the part of young elites which bear the future of Spada, that's why they even accept a low-ranked adventurer like me inside, quite a big-hearted school.

Though, it isn't like I and an elite noble son of someone can take classes together.

Each and everyone is divided in courses based on their ability and status.

「It's better to not get close to the elite cadets, who knows what false charge will they put up, be careful of people wearing Red mantle!」

The elites Simon is warning to me in a harsh tone, are students who have been enrolled in the course with the highest status in school.

One cannot enroll in elite course, unless one competes for the first or second place in exams, and also has a good status.

But the problems come after enrolling, one cannot graduate unless they learn the subjects, magic, martial skills, and everything needed to be the centre of Spada army.

「They must be considerable, for them to use magic and martial skills, both」

「Though, the weaker ones know the lower grade ones, and strong ones, from the time as student, know the high-grade ones」

Based on the characteristics of race and talent, it's extremely

difficulty to learn the highest level magic and martial skills both.

Magic for Elf, martial skills for beast-people, a human without any special ability, can earn both to some extent.

Of course, humans too are probably influenced by the character and talent, so naturally they too are divided in classes like Magician and Warrior.

Though they learn both magic and martial skills, but just like Simon said, because of weak points there is a large difference between the two parties.

Still, there is no change that it's great thing to learn both, and they also learn about subjects and whatnot, they really should be called elites.

「Next, the Knight and Civil courses with more peoples」

The Knight course, just like its name suggests, is for joining the Spada army, so the basic curriculum is same as that of elite course, it seems.

However, because it puts more emphasis on combat, and other subjects are not given emphasis, so learning both magic and martial skills is not regarded highly.

The Knight course is further divided in, Warriors and Magicians, everyone take their choices for learning more advanced martial skills or magic.

The division is somewhat like that of liberal arts and Sciences.

The Civil course, doesn't make a curriculum for entering Spada army, but for working as an government official, so it focuses more on study of subjects.

This Civil course gives me the image of a typical Japanese school.

Of course, it's mandatory to learn somewhat magic, because they would be trouble if they couldn't use the magic items used in work.

The magic item like that which performs updation of guild card, are spread as official supplies.

Incidentally, the Civil course not only sends to government offices, but also large guilds like Commerce Guild or Adventurer Guild.

That beautiful receptionist might also be an alumnus of Civil course.

「And, the course I'm enrolled in is magical engineering course」

From the engineering word, I can understand this course is a technology-based course which manufactures products.

The most famous ones are, blacksmiths who use magicite metal like mithril to make armors.

Manufacturing from not only metals but also materials of monsters into armors, is also the skill of these people.

Here they can learn the knowledge of engineering many things here like making furniture or daily necessities, or architectural skills.

Hearing all this, it's only natural Simon took alchemy in this course.

「I too took the exams of elite course, but naturally, I failed in practical skills」

For three consecutive years, that is, Simon says that making a sour expression, as though she has eaten a bitter bug, looks like those are quite terribly bad memories.

「Lia-nee still persuaded me to change into Elite course.....though, it's impossible for me」

fufu, I, who could only be yes-man to Simon who is expressing a dark laughter, feel like a useless bastard.

「And, for the last is Adventurer course」

This Adventurer course is more near to training institute rather than a school.

The other courses have a detailed curriculum for one year, but this adventurer course is also used by active adventurers, so they can take the lectures they want to at any time, this is quite a free class course.

The normal classes are of a year according to curriculum, but this adventurer course, just like the course of a person delivering morning newspaper, is of small period, that too of some several months.

Though one can graduate if earned required credits, but there are more cases in adventurer course, of people dropping out of school after taking classes they deemed as necessary.

「Novice adventurers do take the course seriously, but the ones with low education and good strength, leave as soon as they learn how to read characters. Among them, there also who seriously want to study, so there are various types in adventurer course」

「So that's the reason behind many older people wearing school uniform」

So the adults I saw in uniforms in the city and guild, are those who only take the classes they want to take.

Which reminds me, I, Lily and Fiona also fall in this category.

After all this time, I don't have any need to take lectures on how to deal with monsters, make camps, how to use guilds, like a novice adventurer.

But, I do want to know about this world's subjects, geography, history, and also about black gods.

「Yeah, I really should try going to school」

「Oh, Onii-san haven't you graduated from a military school at your home place?」

Eeh, what is that back-setting, did I ever say something like that?

「I thought you went to an army school, because Onii-san knows

things that adventurers don't know like, speaking in formal language, reading and writing, knowing tactics, and using awesome black magic」

Is it different? Well, the answer is Yes, it is.

「Were you some magi's apprentice?」

「Nope, wrong」

「.....Then, Onii-san just where and how did you learn magic?」

Eyes of suspicion pierce into me.

Well, is it fine if I tell Simon that I'm an another worlder?

「No, it might be better tell you」

The disadvantage to me revealing it is only, me being treated as an insane person with no proof.

But, Simon understands the scientific knowledge I have, so she's the person who can easily believe me than others.

「I will tell at a place where no one else can hear」

「Ah, I see, Yeah, then how about going to the roof?」

Like that, we head towards the splendid main building that extends from the main entrance.

Chapter 188 - Things to do in School

Aiming for the roof of right wing of main building, I went up the stairs.

From its appearance, I thought only students with high status from the elite course could use the main building, but in truth, it wasn't like that, and we easily entered it.

The rooftop is always opened, so there was no reason to be blamed, and we can go up the stairs without any problem.

Apparently right now it is class times, so there are no students in this area.

But during the lunch break after an hour, this place too would be filled with many students, weather too is good today.

While thinking that, I walk under the guidance of Simon and,

「 We have a preceding visitor, eh 」

「 Looks like it 」

On the rooftop, which I thought nobody would be present, there stood a single a student.

At a glance, he looks like a boy of same age, his hair is same as mine, black hair, it adds up the resemblance to my former classmates.

Maybe he was taking a nap, but noticing our presence, he sluggishly straightened his body, and languidly stood up.

He is wearing the same black blazer like Simon, but there is a red mantle waving from its shoulders.

I see, so this is an elite student, eh

「 」

This elite student, maybe, had thought his nap got disturbed due us appearing and like that he started moving towards the door for leaving the roof.

I clearly see the face of student, who just now passed by me.

My first impression, quite a lady-killer he is.

I envied him, because if I had looked more like dad, not mom, then I would also be a handsome boy with neutral gender beauty.

No, though a handsome boy, but he's isn't much younger, his height is not like that of mine but it reaches 180 cms. He has slender tall stature, and his languid expression on face too looks somewhat elegant.

However, other than the beauty, I am more curious about his black hair and red eyes.

His black hair and red eyes are the same as Mia, at least, I still haven't seen any other person with those colors.

No, here are people with strange colors that can't be found on earth, like Fiona, so maybe people with red eyes black hair are not so rare.

Agreeing on self-hypothesis, I without keeping it in mind, I,

「 Is that the so-called elite student? 」

Casually ask Simon.

「 Yeah, but that person is special even among the elite students 」

「 Is that so? 」

I thought, it must be because he is a delinquent among the elite students, but the answer from Simon was far exceeding my expectations.

「Nero Julius Elrod, he is the first prince of ‘the old demon king territory’, Avalon」

Avalon is a big city-state adjacent to Spada.

Above all, the second name ‘old demon king territory’ is something I heard even when I was living in village of Irz.

The imperial empire created by the ancient demon king, Mia Elrod, is Elrod Empire, Avalon is its imperial capital.

In other words, the present city-state Avalon, is the legitimate successor state of ancient Elrod empire.

「By any chance, Mia Elrod and the guy from before are of same blood line?」

In that case, I can explain that he got those black hair red eyes due to genetic inheritance.

「Who knows, just like Bardiel, it is doubtful if the royalty of Avalon have the same blood as that of demon king」

「.....I see」

In that case, should I think it’s a coincidence?

I try to hear more, but they all keep getting away from Mia’s appearance, like the king of Avalon has black hair blue eyes, before that was blonde hair blue eyes.

Yeah, so this coincidentally happened to be same colors.

I have many curious question like, why some big like him from another country is commuting to this school, but before that,

「Well then, looks like there is no one, I will now tell about myself」

「Ah, Yeah, That’s right」

I should speak about the fact of me being another worlder.

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One day, I got summoned to this world, got turned into a guinea pig for human experiments, fortunately escaped from the laboratory, met with Lily, and Irz was destroyed, all that is my connection with crusaders till today.

「But, no matter how much I hate it, I can't possibly got to Arc continent and kill the people and destroy the laboratories. Ever since I got this left eye, I had thought——」

I gently touched the deep crimson left eye, from outer surface of eyelid.

「The current me, can only fight against the crusaders in front of me. If they invaded Spada, the many soldiers, no, it would be completely destroyed and once again people living life peacefully would die, in large numbers. I alone cannot protect all those people, but, if I didn't fight then I wouldn't be able to save even one person」

「Don't you ever think to run away? After all, this country isn't the one Onii-san was born in, the world, in the first place is different, it hasn't even been 1 year since you have come to this side, do you think it has that worth that you will fight with your life on line?」

Simon said, while facing downwards.

Run, eh, certainly I had thought about it, but I forgot about it three seconds later.

[ET: It is written as 3 steps later, but that it means seconds. This line relates with an old thinking, that airheaded people forget things in really short time. If it becomes a big problem, we people call it short-term memory loss]

「The only people I want to protect with my life on line, are Lily, Fiona and you, Simon」

Saying that, I get embarrassed, while hiding my embarrassment, I pat the head of Simon.

Strangely, without showing any resistance, I continued speaking while patting her head.

「But, I just can't forgive those crusaders bastards for doing what they want under the name of god. No matter how many hundreds of thousands of them are, no matter if apostles are there, I will still choose fighting rather than running, fortunately, I have 'power' to fight」

The power that those bastards gave me on their own.

Normally, I too would have had to kill the 'demon race' of Pandora like those experimental bodies lead by Cyprus, but I can turn the same power on them.

「Onii-san, is it because you're strong, that you don't fear fighting.....?」

While fixing her slightly disheveled ashen hair, Simon murmurs.

「Of course I'm scared of dying, but I'm more scared of losing someone important to me without doing anything. Don't those knights also fight because they have someone or something they want to protect?」

Among them, surely there might people who love fight like Vulcan, but saying that right now would be insensitive.

「I'm, scared of it」

A gust of wind blows on the roof.

The bangs of Simon flutter due to wind, and her emerald eyes can be seen.

It, seemed like she could cry at any moment.

「During the fight in Alsace, I was desperate, so I didn't feel it. However, after I survived when Susu-san protected me, I have

gotten scared of fighting 』

Maybe she didn't want her expression to be shown, Simon faced away, and continued her words.

「Even I want to avenge the death of everyone by fighting the crusaders, I too want to save this country. I get scared thinking what if that white army came striking on this country, I still can't help but shiver thinking what if that monster which killed everyone appears! 』

I couldn't find words to say to her.

The starting point for our fear is different in the first place, I have a tough body which won't be easily hurt, but Simon looks like a child and has a power exactly like that of a child.

Though we have tasted the pain of hell together, but I got power in short time, and Simon's training for power didn't bore fruit for a long time. So, I don't have words to say to her.

「.....Sorry, forget what I just said. I'm fine, I will fight again when crusaders attack Spada 』

Saying that Simon turns back to me.

「No, it's fine 』

「Eh? 』

「You're an alchemist, then you don't need to fight, right? 』

Simon makes a puzzled expression, having difficulty making out the meaning of my words.

But, without paying attention to it, I continue speaking.

「But Simon, you have the potential to kill the most crusaders that anyone else 』

「Eh, what does that mean—— 』

「 Won't you create a gun? 」

Simon's eyes widened in shock, after finally knowing my intention.

This is, the other reason I came to talk to Simon today.

「 Though we lost in Alsace, but the power of gun was demonstrated, right? 」

Machine guns splendidly pulverized the attacks of infantrymen.

Using Yatagarasu, Simon head-shotted many enemy magicians.

We would have more easy fight, if all the adventurer alliance had rifles and guns.

Though there are sturdy people like heavy knights through which bullets don't cross, but the main power of Crusaders is the enormous numbers.

「Mass production of gun 」

「 Not only this, If it's you, Simon, then it is possible to make even more weapons 」

For example artilleries, land mines, it is possible to make the weapons which use gunpowder with some time.

Not only that, if we use magic instead of gunpowder, it is possible to even make a missile.

「 The information about science & technology inside my head is not present in this world, though I don't know exactly detailed information, but Simon would be able to make it out 」

That's right, this genius alchemist, will be able to make things near the original version, all based on my vague information, after all she made a gun on her own.

This girl has the brains to find the answers even with the slightest hints.

「 You even have a new research laboratory, so how about it? 」

「 Hm.....Yes! That's right, I just have make a really awesome weapon! 」

Right, you just have to leave everything to tough people like me who will fight at the front-lines.

「 Well then, it is necessary to get research funds 」

「 Eh, Ah..... 」

Simon has a face as though she just sobered up.

She is a poverty struck student, working as an adventurer to pay school expenses, it's not possible for her to get capital to make modern weapons.

「 I will get that for you, by working 」

「 Eh, No that's not good! 」

「 Don't mind it, I'm not giving out pocket money to you, but this is investment, thinking that you will make weapons that will annihilate those bastards 」

It is good to tell her, that right now, I don't have assets to invest large amount of money.

I'm still a rank 2 adventurer, I can't accept the quests that can help me make a killing.

However 『Element Master』 will easily get promoted to rank 4.

I don't know how much great rank 5 is, but rank 4 will give enough money, that I could even buy a big house in noble district.

「 Yeah, I will work hard! I will live up to your expectations, Onii-san! 」

Simon has her eyes blazing for doing research. It's good that she's in high-spirits.

「 Ah, but right now, only Simon knows how to use a gun, so maybe you will have to fight as a sniper 」

「 Ehh, you say that now!? 」

At any rate, the modern weapon development projected, Established!

「 Simon's weapons will kill the crusaders, and defeating crusaders—— 」

A bullet wouldn't be able to pierce that white aura, no matter how many bullets are fired.

With the cannon balls in artilleries, it isn't possible to aim perfectly.

The weapons made for 'normal people' is not of any help against apostles having superhuman strength in their bodies.

「 ——That is my work 」

That's why. I will 'personally' oppose apostles with power rivalling them.

There is a possibility to materialize the divine protection of Mia Elrod, above all Mia talked as though she knows about the apostles of white god.

Mia's identity is still unknown, but currently this is the most probable one that I can think of.

「 But, is that divine protection something you can trust? 」

「 It is still a possibility..... 」

It hurts that I cannot affirm whether I will certainly get the divine protection or not.

Currently, I have no idea what the trial is, and there is no reason Crusaders will wait for me to get divine protection.

The uncertainty of divine protection, the unknown departure time

of crusaders, I have a mountain of problems.

「 More or less, my basic policy is to get power by fighting stronger monsters 」

I'm not relying on divine protection only for power, I chose to increase the rank because I want to polish my power by fighting stronger monsters.

「 Fighting them, that is going to be hard. I thought you will train to learn new magic or martial skills 」

「 Training, huh.....I didn't do anything other than practical fights during mobility experiments, so I never even thought about it 」

Now that she said it, the way to get stronger is by training, right.

It might sound exaggerated, but a bullied child starts learning boxing for getting stronger, that is the right way to get stronger.

「 Though you say training, I have no idea of what to do in that 」

Do I have stand under a waterfall? No, that is for mental strength and won't help for power, right. [ET: seriously, what is this guy thinking. Lolololol]

「 In that case, learn that in the school, right? 」

I see, you're completely right.

Now that I think about it, I had talked to those two for going to school.

At that time, I was thinking to go to school for learning more about fundamental knowledge of this world.

「 If I want to, then can I come to this school? 」

From what I talked before, I couldn't get the detailed information of this school but a student is in front of me, I will easily get it.

「 Yeah, there might type of people like Onii-san in the Adventurer

course.」

「Are there other type of people too?」

In the first place, what sort of type am I?

「The novice adventurers, join the adventurer training school which tells each and everything from the start, rather than joining Adventurer course which only has a curriculum and doesn't tell that much」

I see, certainly I'm not a rookie adventurer, but in less than 3 months I have already reached rank 2.

「That's why, Onii-san wouldn't want to learn explanation of Guild or quests, so it will be better if you only take the classes of things you don't know」

Completely right, I'm thinking if this system was made specially for me.

「Just like I said before, there are more adventurer with power and no brains, so our school accepts them, here they can learn whatever they want to」

The dropping out of school without graduating after learning the things needed, is like a symbolic phenomenon.

And, the only place I can study while being an adventurer is this place only.

「By the way, how much will it take for enrolling?」

「I don't know the particulars, but the adventurer course is the most cheap course, you can earn the school expenses during school, like me, as for enrollment fees, minimum you should have around 100K klan」

100K, is this high or low.....yeah, when I was in Irz, it didn't even take a month to earn 100K klan, which in Daedalus currency is, 10 gold.

In that case, if a rank 1 adventurer can earn that much, then 100K is not that costly of an amount.

The most expensive things for adventurers is the equipments, let alone cursed weapons, even a normal sword costs 1000K klan.

「That's right.....I think I will try going to school」

「Yeah, it will be good!」

Simon approves it with a smile.

「Alright, after I become rank 3 after completing the currents quests, I will come here」

For sure, Lily and Fiona will also come with me, it is going to be a good interesting school life for me.

No doubt it is due to me having lingering affection for my high-school life which was suddenly interrupted.

Chapter 189 - Is this a mixed bath? No, it is a men's bath

From the afternoon, in the large storage room, no, in the new laboratory of Simon, the meeting revealing about the modern-science began.

Though, I only have knowledge on the high-schooler level, it is not possible for me to think on something that can be immediately made in this world.

For the time being, I told her about my world, more precisely about the modern-day Japan.

I didn't stop at just weapons like guns, but told about transportation methods like car, train, airplane, then went on to telecommunication means like radio, television, and mobile phone, and also told about computer. I couldn't know what kind of image would Simon, an another world inhabitant, would have about these devices, but she seemed to have piqued a really great interest in them.

However, the time doesn't forgive to keep on talking endlessly.

When I realized the sun was setting down, I decided to call it a day there.

But however, at the time of returning,

「It was quite hot today, there is even sweat, maybe I will enter the bath」

If Simon didn't say something like, I would've been back at inn.

「There is a bath!？」

「Eh, yes there is?」

Simon makes a eye filled with suspicion saying 'Did you not know', regarding my ignorance.

Of course, I don't know, the only things I know about this world, are limited to the things I had learned as an adventurer in a rural countryside area.

「 There was no bath in Irz 」

「 There wasn't even one in Alsace too. Places like public bathhouse wouldn't be present unless there is a big city like Spada, only and unless a natural spring appears 」

Spada, you rock! Here, a public bathhouse is present.....This is for the first time, I'm thinking it was good to come to Spada.

Why? Bath is the true heart of Japan, till now I have beared with the torture of wiping my body with wet towel, it's obvious I want to enter the bath.

I want to immerse myself in the bathtub filled with hot water and just RELAX!

「 Ah, err, then shall we go together? 」

「 Of course, what are we waiting for! 」

At that time, Simon seemed like a healing goddess to me.

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After walking for about 5 minutes outside of school, there stood a public bathhouse, boldly standing out.

「 I-It was in a place this recognisable..... 」

I failed to notice it, no, I simply hadn't come in this area.

Still, I can only lament over the fact that I hadn't come to this area before.

A large building like this on the main street will catch my attention

even if I don't like it, furthermore, due the fact I can read this world's letters, there is no way I would possibly not catch sight of this largely written 『Public Bathhouse』

「It is quite rowdy, even at this time」

The cloudless red dyed sky, informs the end of day

Even so, there are many people like humans and other races, going in and out of public bathhouse continuously.

「Spada has long running times even in night totally different from rural area, therefore many people come at this time too」

Simon, holding a bath towel and bath set under her arms, told me.

「Well then, let's enter fast」

「That's right」

While making my heart throb faster in expectation for the coming hyper-relax-time, I passed through the entrance of bathhouse which is two-leaf door.

In the front was an imposing watch stand, customers which entered like me, were paying the fees to the old lady standing there as a gatekeeper.

On the left was a door with the picture of a deformed man along with word 『Man』 written, on the right was the female version of it.

This place is like a lobby, there are some people here and there sitting on benches and drinking some sort of drink filled inside a cup. Seems like there isn't much difference in the public bathhouse of this world or of Earth.

「Bathing is of 300 klan, and talking a towel charges 50 klan」

Before I started searching for price list, Simon made a smart move and tells me.

I take out 350 klan, and head towards the watch stand along with Simon.

I pay the fees without a hitch, take the towel set, and head towards the men's bat for enjoying bath to my heart's content.

I open the sliding door, inside was the dressing room as if it's natural for it to be present there.

The scene of nude men walking towards the bathroom with towel in one hand looks exactly like that of public bathhouses of Japan.

But, because they all are adventurers, all have toned muscular bodies only.

Not only that, there are also beast people and other races, it is filled with another world feeling.

It might be none of my concern, would it help the skeleton at all if they enter the bath?

While thinking such a ridiculous thing, I fling the apprentice magician robe in the undressing basket lined up on the shelves.

「 But, this is not much different than Japan's bathhouses 」

「 Hmm, is that so 」

「 Yeah—— 」

Eh, What, I think I just heard a voice that shouldn't be present here.

「 What happened, Onii-san? 」

Looks like it's an auditory hallucination, I face the way voice came from

「 W-Why are you here!? 」

And, there stood Simon, with half undressed shirt showing her white shoulders, as though it is natural.

What the! Here is without a doubt Men's bath, no matter if she likes

to cross-dress a boy, this isn't the place she should actually come to.

No, was there some problem in diving the men's bath and women's bath? No, or this place in the first place, a mixed-bath?

Now that I remember it, during Edo period there were mixed baths, so it might only be natural for it to be present——

「Eh, um.....Onii-san, you don't want to enter together with me?」

I don't know if Simon is trying to seduce me, but she said the line with a really cute expression.

Of course, her body is still half naked, its explosive power will blow my thought process to moon.

But, I'm not the boy who would nosebleed here, That's right, I can bear it if I want to.

「I-It's not the matter of wanting or not wanting, in fact this is men's bath, right?」

「Yeah, that's right.....」

So this really is men's bath, then even more, Simon shouldn't remain here.

「I don't what you're thinking, but quickly go to women's bath, this is not a place a girl should be in」

While mobilizing my rational power, I dress up the half-undressed shirt.

「It's me who doesn't get what you're thinking, why should I go to women's bath.....Eh, Onii-san did you.....」

Maybe she realized something, Simon looks at me with eyes widened from shock.

「Onii-san do you think of me.....as a girl?」

I couldn't get what you're saying.

What does it mean, did Simon by any chance think of me a girl?

No, even in this world, the way of differentiating male and female is same, It's easy to understand upon looking.

Recall it me, I did get Simon is female on the first glance I saw her.....Hm, huh, I perfectly remember that I had trouble differentiating Simon's gender.

Furthermore, not even once, had Simon said her to be girl.

Then had I, on my own accord, thought Simon was a girl and had kept on thinking it?

「 Simon.....are you a man? 」

I timidly ask,

「 !? Onii-san, you idiot! I'm a man, you can look at it!! 」

Like hell I can understand it by looking, I can't say that, I just can't.

Her line is same as the one said by some self-proclaimed god, but yeah, here it was my fault.

「 Sorry, I always thought you were a girl..... 」

「 I'm a man! Really, Onii-san is an idiot! Dimwit! Idioot!! 」

I try to soothe Simon who is pleasantly hitting my chest again and again in a cute manner, and I don't I need to tell how much time it took.

Also, the stares from surrounding, hurted.

I was sorry for creating a ruckus, but when I heard the words 「 What, just a lover's quarrel 」 , I seriously wanted to fire Bullet Arts everywhere.

「I'm sorry 」

「 Uu.....It's fine, many people think I'm a girl many times..... 」

Ah, so that is true.

But leaving it all that, let's have fun in the bath that got postponed.

Like that, I take off the white shirt, and Simon takes out his shirt,

「.....」

It's just that, it feels like that, when I see Simon taking out his clothes at a close distance that our shoulders can touch. It can't be helped, right?

Without noticing my irregular heartbeats, Simon takes off the clothes.

Taking off the shirt, there is no there thing to cover the upper part of body, and the naked body of Simon, who looks like a girl, appears in front of me.

Pale white skin, round shoulders, slim waist, as for chest, unless one knows he is a man, one would of him as a unfortunate girl with very less breasts.

Simon, without hesitating moved his hands to the belt holding up his slacks.

With a click the clasp is released, he then takes out the slacks without hesitation, this time the white legs appear.

As if natural, there is no body hair present on his body,not even leg hair.

Simon is now in just underpants, but I still haven't seen the proof of male gender.

Even theses trunks type underpants, look like squash bloomer to me, is Simon really a man?

Am I, by any chance, getting deceived?

But my conflict gets done in a second, after all, Simon has moved his hands on the underpants.

Gulp, I reflexively gulped, I am seeing the proof of male gender of Simon in next second.

「Simon 」

「 Eh, What? 」

Simon faces me, in his hands a towel, and his body is stark-naked.

「 No, nothing 」

Yeah, there is nothing, because I have the seen as it is from my eyes.

Simon, though you're 'small', but you're without a doubt man.

[ET: Don't worry, you're an ass**** Kurono, you do like cute guys too]

「 Come on, let's go 」

「 Ah, Yeah 」

I too am now naked, completely ready to jump into bathtub.

No, I don't mean jumping literally.

「 Simon, why are looking restless? 」

I, after learning the truth have nothing to fear, and even my rationality has come back.

Simon is restless, no, maybe vigilant of something.

「 Uh, err..... 」

Simon becomes shy, stop it, I, who has learned the truth will have my heart wavered, from his back it doesn't look like he is man.

Even so, I can't ask him to show the front, no, above that I need Simon's explanation.

「 Sometimes, people touch my butt, that's why I have be vigilant 」

「I see.....you've got lot of troubles」

I realized, that it doesn't matter if it's a man or woman, as long it is a cute, everything is fine. This is the truth of world.

[ET: See, I told you guys above!!]

For the time being, I will take care of perverts who will try to molest Simon.

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At any rate, I reached back to inn in good mood, I even wanted to start humming.

The summer breeze on my hot body feels just great.

I was feeling so good, that on my way back, I even bought the rabbit ears attached kids robe for Lily, the one she liked.

The old lady was still the same stubborn witch, but showing my rank 2 guild card, she was somewhat impressed.

I'm grateful that she understands that I'm not some damn noble kid playing around.

Well, still she didn't give me a discount of even a single klan, and I had to purchase the robe for 37,000 klan.

Incidentally, I had thought this robe was made from a white rabbit, but when I heard it was made from the white Punpun living in snowy mountains, I got surprised and also consented to the fluffiness.

Like that, when I reached back to inn in high spirits with the white Punpun robe in one hand,

「Huh, Kurono-san, there is nothing for me?」

I totally forgot about her.

No, I think it's rude to ask for presents, but a sense of guilty swells up, upon seeing Fiona sending a jealousy filled gaze to Lily who is frolicking around white wearing white Pun-robe.

After apologizing, I promised Fiona, to treat her pudding at a later date.

When Element Master was formed, she asked for pudding, so it's natural to complete the promise now.

Incidentally, I have planed to use Simon's laboratory's kitchen, which is quite run-down.

That isn't some storage room, at first it was a dormitory, so there all equipments needed for living.

Setting it aside, I thought to tell Lily and Fiona about joining Royal Spada Academy upon reaching rank 3, but

「In truth, we both have prepared a present for Kurono-san, please take it」

I got an exciting surprise.

「Thank you, I will gladly take it」

But, I, at that time didn't knew the true surprise was the present these girls have prepared for me.

Chapter 190 - Hero and Angel

The Daedalus royal castle, from the topmost balcony present there, an unbroken view of Daedalus townscape could be seen.

That wasn't some capital of uncivilized demons as people from republic had thought, but was civilized and modernistic like the cities of humans.

There were two people standing in the balcony watching Daedalus grow dark slowly.

On one side was a small girl, on the other side was a large youth, both carry beautiful silver hair, at a glance they would seem like brother and sister.

However, there was no connection of blood between them, the word expressing their relationship would be 'work companions'.

The small girl was 7th Apostle Sariel, the large youth was 2nd Apostle Abel, both of them are transcendental beings rewarded with the divine protection of White God.

The warm welcome of him as an envoy sent by Pope had already been completed, the people also had been sent away, and Abel's masculine face was out without any need for hiding.

As 2nd Apostle Abel, he called out to Sariel, who had been standing silently.

「I have heard from Miss Misa, looks like you have had a lot of troubles.」

Though the tone was indifferent and somewhere cold, but it was, without a doubt, words of gratitude.

「Not at all」

Sariel said just that and looked at Abel with her deep crimson pair of eyes.

On the other hand were the pair of black and blue eyes which seemed like night and day, the line of sight of both crossed just for a second.

「Her actions were clearly abuse of her power, I have strictly 'warned' her」 (Abel)

The person who can warn an Apostle could be another Apostle only.

Sariel couldn't possibly know what sort of warning had the 『White Hero』 2nd Apostle Abel, given to her.

Even more because she hadn't gotten such a warning even once, as she had faithfully obeyed the orders of Church till now.

「I don't want another trouble of this sort, however, considering her personality, that can be a tough case」

Sariel saw Abel sighing as though to say Good grief.

Sariel suddenly thought that though Abel always kept an expressionless face and was also cool, calm and collected, but he had human emotion unlike herself.

「I think you already know it, Miss Misa thinks of you as a rival. Though it might be trouble for you, but I want you to keep a good relationship as Apostles」

「Yes」

There was nothing Sariel thought about Misa.

The ill feelings like troublesome or annoying were non-existent, though, good feelings too were non-existent.

「.....Maybe it was unnecessary advice for you」

「No, thank you very much for the advice, Sir Abel」

Perhaps he sensed that Sariel truly didn't think anything in her heart, so he said that, but Sariel could only take the meaning as stated.

「As for problems, Ai too has come here, right?」

「Yes, she visited here on 15th day of Hatsuhi Month」

The information he wouldn't have known from only the report of Misa, Sariel conveyed it along with the words of affirmation.

Abel didn't seem surprised,

「Is slipping past the defenses to come out of blue called as 'visiting'?」

And stated as though he had seen Ai's actions, no, more probable he had experienced the same as Sariel.

Sariel had suspicions whether she could slip past the defenses of Elysion Cathedral, but she suddenly accepted it, because Ai too was loved by God, so it wouldn't be much of a work for her.

「What was she saying?」

「She requested to establish Guilds in Daedalus」

She asked for a normal request, eh, Abel muttered as though being impressed, but he had no way of knowing that she took actions for kissing Sariel after stating her request.

「Have you started the Guild?」

「Yes, for now the quests are only for outskirts of Daedalus, but in near future it would spread in the whole territory」

The mercenary squads which hired from Republic, were still employed as military force for next invasion, but there were some who were disbanded after the suppression of Daedalus territory.

They would have two choices, either stay on Pandora Continent, or return back to Republic, but they would choose the latter because there might be another war in this land.

It is because those type of people were present, there was no deficiency in numbers of adventurers.

Once the Adventurer Guild starts up, the number of people would naturally increase.

「I see, it's good to hear everything is alright, looks like it was alright to leave the supreme commander seat of Crusaders to you」

「Thank you very much」

There were whimsical people like Misa and Ai among the Apostles, so the people like Sarel were valuable.

Thinking that, the compliment by Abel wouldn't be an unnecessary compliment.

「Well then, let me get to the point」

These two ending up together by natural flow would be impossible.

The only reason they had removed the people to be alone meant they had something to talk which shouldn't be heard by others.

「This is the main reason I had come to Pandora Continent, so instead of telling Miss Sarel by letter, I had thought of telling it orally」

In other words, it meant that he didn't want the contents to be seen by her adjutant Liuchrome either.

Thought Abel hadn't said the disclosure is prohibited, but Sarel understood she had to keep the information inside her only.

「On 13th of Hatsuhi Month, I received an oracle saying 'A Demon King is going to be born」

The moment she heard those words, the face of a single man appeared inside the brain of Sarel.

It was the man with black eyes black hair, experiment number 49, Kurono Mao

Why Kurono appeared, the reason, even Sarel didn't knew.

Was it because his black appearance was similar to a Demon King? Or was it because he did deeds in Alsace which cause him to get name 'Devil'?

「I don't know what it exactly meant, but I think a person controlling the demons in Pandora Continent is going to appear, and so I have come here for scouting」

The oracle of White God don't ever explain themselves, it was the work of priests for interpreting what the god in actuality wanted.

Thought there's no proof that Abel's interpretation was correct, but considering the various possibilities, it was the most easy to understand.

In that case, is the person who would 'control the demons in Pandora Continent', that Kurono?

「Of course, from the places I had gone there didn't seem to any person who would be a Demon King, so it is probable that Demon King would be born in this world as a child」

As for warning, she should inform about the man named Kurono, though there's no definite evidence, but she should have.

「.....Yes」

However, other than those words, no other words came out of Sariel's mouth.

The slight hesitation, the silence of a second, wasn't noticed by Abel, so he continued in a calm voice.

「If a Demon King really appears, then it would be Miss Sariel, you, who would make the first contact with it, and, that Demon King must be a great existence because he was informed of through an oracle. Just when we thought our work of conquering Pandora Continent would be easily done after repelling Daedalus army, has now gotten wrong. Take actions with vigilance」

「Yes」

After that, they both talked some more words, then Abel left the place.

「Kurono.....Maou」

[ET: It ain't his name. Maou = Demon King, Satan, Demon Lord. Mao (his name) = kind-hearted, lovable (his face doesn't look like that), strong, and truthful. In other words, Mao = pussy wimp who can't be cruel]

The image of Demon King, which every citizen of Republic holds, Sariel too holds it.

The sky shrouded with dark ominous clouds, a creepy castle standing in the dark night, and sitting on the throne positioned at top, a fiendish looking man waiting for Hero while laughing, that's the image.

After becoming an adult, they would laugh it off, saying such a Demon King couldn't possibly exist.

However, Sariel imagined the scene of Kurono sitting on throne, who was ordering army of demons to annihilate the Crusaders while laughing loudly. This was the first time she had felt her imagination to be abnormally real.